

APPENDIX M

STREAMLINING TECHNIQUES FOR A-E CONTRACTS AND TASK ORDERS

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop a schedule for each A-E contract or task order showing the dates and responsible offices and persons for each contracting activity. All responsible staff members should agree with this schedule. Track actual dates compared to scheduled dates for each activity and document reasons for significant delays. Revise the schedule as required.
2. Assign a specific team member with the overall responsibility and accountability to track and control each A-E contracting schedule.
3. Encourage continual communication among A-E contracting team members.
4. Use automation and standardization to the maximum extent for preparing correspondence, public announcements, preselection and selection board reports, IGE, PnM, PNM and other typical documents in the A-E contracting process.
5. Minimize the number of offices and persons who review each document such as public announcements, board reports, IGE, PnM and PNM. Consider the "value added" of each reviewer and the dollar value, complexity and risk of the contract action. Conduct reviews concurrently whenever possible. Set a suspense date for each reviewer.
6. Delegate approval authorities to the lowest reasonable level, considering the dollar value, complexity and risk of the contract action.
7. Collocate the Engineering Division and Contracting Division personnel that are principally involved in A-E contracting to improve communications, teamwork and efficiency.
8. Procure A-E services up the micro-purchase threshold of \$2,500 using the Government purchase card.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVALUATION BOARDS

1. Coordinate proposed A-E acquisitions with the DSB early to avoid delaying release of public announcements.
2. Commanders do not have to approve the membership of each board. The designated chairperson may appoint members from a standing list of eligible personnel designated by the commander.
3. Have a sufficient number of alternate board members to ensure that boards are held when scheduled.

4. A board should stay convened and fully committed to its task until it is completed. Minimize disruptions.
5. Do not prepare or use elaborate tabulations of information from the SFs 254 and 255 since the board members must still personally review the SFs 254 and 255 and prepare a consensus evaluation.
6. A preselection board can usually be held within 2-3 days of the closing date of a synopsis, and a selection board within 3-5 days of the preselection board.
7. Consider eliminating preselection boards. One board can typically do the entire selection process in two days, including interviewing and ranking the most highly qualified firms, and drafting the board report. Not only is the total selection process substantially shortened, but the overall labor hours and costs are also considerably reduced.
8. Review of the SFs 254 and 255 by a preselection board may be divided up among the voting members. Each firm's submission is reviewed by one member, using the evaluation system established by the board. The review of each firm is then presented and discussed by the entire board, and consensus is reached on the evaluation of each firm. (This does not apply to selection boards.)
9. Use a standard preselection board cover memorandum report that can be prepared prior to the board meeting, and completed and signed by all board members at the meeting. Attach handwritten worksheets reflecting the board's consensus for each firm. Using this method, the report is completed when the board adjourns.
10. A preselection board report does not have to be separately approved. It can be attached to the selection board report and approved as a package.
11. Conduct telephone interviews with the most highly qualified firms, instead of in-person interviews, to the maximum extent possible. Typically, the firms need only be notified 2-3 hours in advance of the interview. A selection board should usually be able to evaluate the highly qualified firms, interview and rank the most highly qualified firms, and prepare a draft report in the same day.
12. Since equitable distribution of DoD work is a secondary criterion, do not compile or report DoD contract award data unless this criterion is used by a selection board as a "tie-breaker" in ranking the most highly qualified firms.
13. Use a standard selection board cover memorandum that can be completed and signed by all board members prior to adjourning the meeting. Written evaluations reflecting the board's consensus can be prepared in final form soon after the meeting and attached to the memorandum.
14. Commanders should delegate full selection authority as allowed by EFARS 36.602-4.

15. When MSC approval of a selection will be required, coordinate the schedule, selection criteria, and evaluation method in advance with the MSC.

NEGOTIATION AND AWARD

1. As soon as the selection is approved, notify the top ranked A-E firm by telephone. At the same time, notify the firm of the date and location for the preproposal conference. Promptly follow up the telephone call with a formal notification letter and RFPP. Similar procedures also apply to task orders.
2. Develop the SOW and assemble all pertinent criteria during the synopsis and selection period so that this information can be provided to the A-E firm immediately after selection notification and not delay the acquisition.
3. Carefully prepare for the preproposal conference and have the "right" people there who can make decisions in order to promptly and properly resolve issues. Aggressively pursue any SOW issues remaining after the conference, and resolve them before award.
4. If schedule is important, state in the public announcement the requirement to submit a price proposal within a specific period after the preproposal conference. Impress upon the A-E firm that the timeliness of their proposal may be considered in its performance evaluation if they are awarded a contract.
5. Use DoL "on-line" electronic wage rate determinations if the SCA applies to a contract.
6. A revised IGE is only required if there is a significant change in the Government's position, and is not required to justify accepting an A-E proposal greater than the IGE. The PnM explains the significant differences between the IGE and the proposed Government negotiation position (PNO). Similarly, the PNM explains the significant differences between the PNO and the final negotiated price.
7. After receiving a price proposal, hold a fact-finding session(s) with the A-E firm to obtain information in order to understand the proposal and its assumptions, and to clarify the SOW and RFPP, as required. A revised price proposal may then be requested. The first proposal(s) must still be mentioned in the PNM.
8. Only require review and approval of the PnM for large or complex actions. Hence, for most actions, the negotiators should be allowed to proceed with negotiations when they are adequately prepared and without higher level review or approval. (Of course, only the KO can approve the final agreement. Hence, the negotiators should coordinate with the KO if they have any doubt about the course of the negotiations.)
9. Use tabular comparisons to simplify the preparation of cost and price analysis, technical analysis, PNO, and PNM. Express the PNO as ranges to give the negotiators flexibility.

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10. Minimize the use of audits. Audit is a tool available to the KO and negotiators to assist in determining the reasonableness of a proposal. Typically, experience in pricing similar contract actions and market surveys published by A-E professional and industry organizations provide sufficient information to judge the reasonableness of a firm's proposal without requiring an audit.

11. If an audit is needed, advise the auditor of the requirement as soon as the A-E firm is selected for negotiations. Provide the auditor the request for price proposal and any data available on the firm so that the auditor can conduct preliminary research. Also, instruct the firm to submit a copy of their proposal directly to the auditor. Keep in close contact with the auditor during the conduct of the audit.

12. If a small business subcontracting plan is required, it should be submitted with the price proposal, and reviewed, negotiated and approved in parallel with the price negotiation.

13. Coordinate with the customer or higher authority, as appropriate, on estimated funding requirements prior to negotiations to avoid any "surprises" or delays in final funding authorization when negotiations are completed.

14. Do not require separate review and approval of a PNM. Instead, include the PNM with the contract action when it is staffed for review and signature.

15. After completing negotiations, begin preparation of the contract or task order while awaiting funds certification.

16. Initiate the pre-award survey and Equal Employment Opportunity Clearance (for contracts of \$10 million or more in accordance with FAR 22.805(a)) as soon as an A-E firm is selected for negotiations to avoid delaying contract award. (Not applicable to task orders.)

17. Expedite award by having the A-E principal come to the contracting office to sign the contract with the contracting officer. If this is not possible, expedite the award of a fixed-price contract using an award letter similar to the following sample.

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**SAMPLE AWARD LETTER
FIXED-PRICE CONTRACT**

CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

SUBJECT: Contract No. _____

A-E Firm Name
Address

Gentlemen:

Your final proposal dated _____ in the amount of \$_____ for
_____(Project Title)_____ at _____(Location)_____
has been accepted.

The contract is enclosed for your prompt review. If you find the contract acceptable, you are hereby directed to immediately proceed to work. Please sign and date both copies of the contract, which I have already signed. Keep one copy and return the other copy to me. The contract is effective the date you sign it.

If you have any questions, please contact _____(Contract Specialist)_____ at
telephone number _____.

Sincerely,

Contracting Officer

Enclosures